

# About Carbon Monoxide

**Carbon monoxide (CO) is a highly dangerous toxic gas that can kill. It is produced by any fossil fuel (e.g. gas, coal, oil, wood, charcoal) that burns incompletely. The silent killer has no smell, taste or colour.**

Everyone is at risk from CO poisoning. It bonds with haemoglobin in your blood and replaces the oxygen needed to sustain your brain and body. It can kill if you are exposed to large quantities or build up over time. Symptoms include dizziness, nausea and headaches. These are often misdiagnosed by the medical profession.

Initiatives by Government and industry have led to a significant reduction in the number of deaths from natural gas over the last 20 years. However, as the Trust's recent *Downstream Incident Data Report* highlights, there is no room for complacency. People are still putting themselves at an avoidable risk of death and injury, and it is now other sources that are the main cause of CO poisoning. One emerging danger is from barbecues where media reports suggest over a dozen people may have died over the last 2 years. Consequently, the Gas Safety Trust has broadened its remit to take this into account.

The Department of Health believe that as many as 40 people die in England and Wales each year, with 200 being admitted to hospital and many more being treated and sent home. They believe that these figures underestimate the problem due to the difficulties in diagnosis.



Preventing carbon monoxide poisoning through evidence based research and data collection

## Contact us

If you are interested in applying to the Gas Safety Trust for funding, you can find full details on our website.

[www.gassafetytrust.org](http://www.gassafetytrust.org)  
[www.coportal.org](http://www.coportal.org)



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CORGI Services Ltd donates its profits to support the Gas Safety Trust



The Gas Safety Trust is a non-profit making organization. The primary objective for the Trust is to work towards reducing the number of deaths and serious injury in the UK from fuel related incidents. It is an independent organisation, free from the influence of external stakeholders.  
Registered Charity Number 1110624 © Gas Safety Trust 2015.



# About Gas Safety Trust

The Gas Safety Trust, established in 2005 as a registered charitable body, has become the UK's leading gas safety research charity with the key objectives of further improving gas/fossil fuel safety for the public and industry throughout the UK and reducing the incidents of death and serious injury from carbon monoxide (CO) exposure. The Trust does this through the funding of research and data collection relating to CO poisoning.



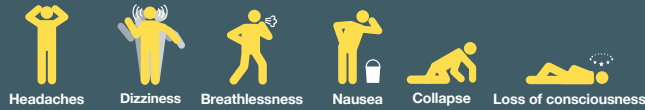
We provide grant funding, advice and support to any organisation to carry out research and evidence gathering relating to gas safety. We would currently welcome applications for funding for projects looking at (but not limited to) the following areas:

- **Low level exposure**
- **Built environment**
- **Medics' understanding and awareness**
- **Leisure activities**

**Since 2013 we have awarded over £500,000 to a variety of programmes and projects relating to gas/fossil fuel safety and carbon monoxide.**



## Are you at risk of carbon monoxide poisoning?



**If you think you are suffering from CO exposure you should ask yourself these questions:**

- **Are others in the house feeling ill too?**
- **When you leave the house for a period of time do you feel better?**

If the answer to either of these is yes, then you may be suffering from CO poisoning and should seek professional advice.

**Anyone spending time with faulty appliances is at risk.** The most vulnerable are babies and young children, pregnant women and people with heart or breathing problems such as asthma.

**If you have had building work done recently**, such as double glazing installation, or if floodwater has caused the build-up of silt or debris, your property's ventilation may be affected.

**If your flue, chimney, extractor or airway is blocked or leaking**, CO cannot escape and can build up to dangerous levels. If you have shared chimneys or flues CO may be coming from next door.

**Tents, caravans, boats and mobile homes** are at risk because portable appliances that use bottled fuels such as liquid petroleum gas, paraffin or kerosene are often used for heating and cooking.

**Vehicle engine or generator exhaust gases** can also contain high levels of CO.

### How can you protect yourself against CO poisoning?

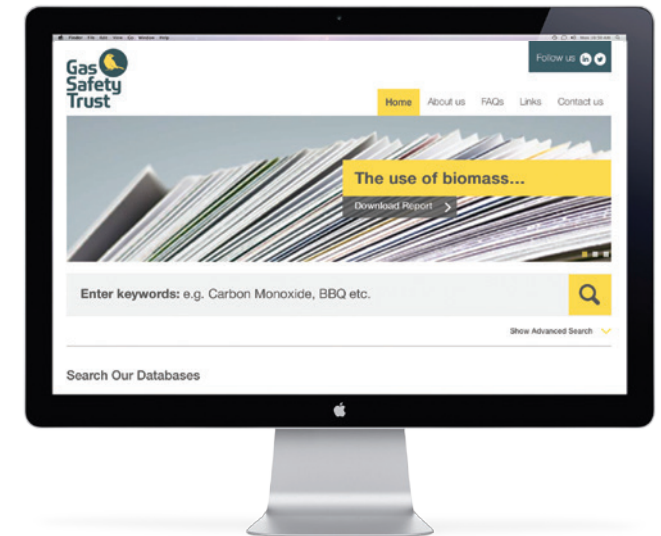
- Never use outdoor appliances like barbecues, camping stoves and paraffin heaters, indoors
- Fit an audible CO alarm that meets European Standard EN50291
- Take a battery operated CO alarm when camping
- Keep rooms well ventilated when using an appliance
- Ventilate garages when running a car or paraffin generator
- Have all appliances, flues and chimneys installed and serviced by reputable, registered engineers
- Have your chimney completely swept at least once a year
- Ensure your landlord provides the legal annual safety check on installed appliances

## CO Portal

As part of the Gas Safety Trust's work in supporting research and data collection initiatives, the Trust has launched its CO Portal which holds documents, links and data relating to CO poisoning in the UK. Sections include:

- **Legislation, standards and normative documents**
- **Academic references database**
- **Data and documents that have been funded by GST grants and produced by others**

The CO Portal was created in response to recommendations in both the 2011 *All Party Parliamentary Carbon Monoxide Group Preventing Carbon Monoxide* report and more recently the *Carbon Monoxide: From Awareness to Action* report which was published in 2015.



To visit the CO Portal go to  
**[www.coportal.org](http://www.coportal.org)**

